

**MINUTES OF THE
WORKFORCE SERVICES AND COMMUNITY
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Wednesday, May 16, 2007 – 2:00 p.m. – Room W025 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Mark B. Madsen, Senate Chair
Rep. Steven R. Mascaró, House Chair
Sen. Allen M. Christensen
Sen. Fred J. Fife
Sen. Patricia W. Jones
Rep. Janice M. Fisher
Rep. Julie Fisher
Rep. Christopher N. Herrod
Rep. Karen W. Morgan

Members Absent:

Sen. Dan R. Eastman
Sen. Jon J. Greiner
Rep. James A. Dunnigan

Staff Present:

Mr. Arthur L. Hunsaker, Policy Analyst
Mr. James L. Wilson, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Glenda S. Whitney, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Mascaró called the meeting to order at 2:16 p.m.

MOTION: Sen. Fife moved to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2007 meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Madsen and Rep. Julie Fisher absent for the vote.

2. Public Assistance Benefits Available through the Department of Workforce Services

Ms. Kristen Cox, Executive Director, and Ms. Kathy Link, Operations and Support Division, DWS (Department of Workforce Services), distributed copies and gave a slide presentation on "Public Assistance Benefit Overview." Ms. Cox presented an overview on the DWS's public assistance programs. Ms. Cox and Ms. Link reviewed the public assistance benefit funding, the poverty in Utah, and other benefits available through the department. Ms. Cox noted the mission of DWS is to provide employment and support services for its customers to improve their economic opportunities. Other copies distributed by DWS included, "Pause the Clock?: Examining the Need" and a compact disc, "Making America Strong, U.S. Food Stamp Program."

Ms. Helen Thatcher, Assistant Director, Operations and Support Division, DWS, reviewed the DWS's job training process and food stamp programs.

Mr. Jim Robson, Economist, DWS, responded to committee questions and discussed the poverty rate in the various Utah counties along the Wasatch Front.

3. Hardship Extension in the Family Employment Program

Ms. Karen Silver, Salt Lake Community Action Program, noted concerns with the hardship extensions in the Family Employment Program. She distributed written comments, "Facilitating Positive Employment Outcomes for Families Participating in the Family Employment Program."

Ms. Cox responded to committee questions and clarified DWS's rule on receipt of cash assistance beyond the 36-month, state-established eligibility period.

Ms. Patrice Schell, Voices for Utah Children, asked that the Social Research Institute that prepared the report "Pause the Clock?: Examining the Need" be available to discuss its findings at the next committee meeting.

4. Other Items / Adjourn

Chair Mascaro noted that the Legislative Management Committee approved the Committee's additional Interim study items: (1) Child Care Access for Working Mothers, and (2) Senior and Disabled Care.

MOTION: Sen. Christensen moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously

Chair Mascaro adjourned the meeting at 3:42 p.m.